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Western Region Variety of the Standard Ukrainian Language in the Interwar Period. A Review of Liudmyla Pidkuimukha's monograph "Mova L'vova, abo koly i batiary hovoryly" (Kyiv: Klio, 2020, ss. 326)¹

Abstract

The reviewed monograph is the first extensive paper on the vocabulary of the western variant of the Ukrainian language based on the texts of the 'Twelve', an interwar literary circle of writers from L'viv. The paper highlights the social dialects that functioned in L'viv during the interwar period, in particular the jargon of schoolchildren and athletes. Particular attention is paid to *balak*, which became a linguistic feature of the *Batyar* subculture. This subculture reached its peak in the 1920s and 1930s. Material collated from three editions of B. Nyzhankivskyi's collection 'Street' (1936, 1941, 1995) illustrates the specifics of Soviet editorial practice, which was aimed at limiting the use of western Ukrainian vocabulary in order to artificially bring the Ukrainian language closer to Russian.

Keywords: western variant of standard Ukrainian; L'viv dialect; L'viv speech; *Batyar* phenomenon

The city of L'viv is able to attract the attention not only of ordinary people from all over the world, but also of linguists. Although in Polish linguistics the language of L'viv is described in an extensive monograph by Zofia Kurzowa (Kurzowa, 1983, 1985, 2006), which had three editions and remains popular even almost 30 years after its publication, Ukrainian linguistics could not boast of such a work until 2020. Liudmyla Pidkuimukha's study (Pidkuimukha, 2020b) is an important view of the situation of the Ukrainian language in interwar L'viv, and it demonstrates the functioning of language in a multilingual space.

The monograph consists of a preface, 5 chapters, conclusions and 3 appendices. Professor Liudmyla Tkach, in the introduction to the monograph, shows the importance of publishing from the perspective of other works on the western variant of Ukrainian and a comparison of it with the lexemes that can be found in dictionaries of the time.

The author begins her study by analysing the historical formation, functioning and state of research on the western variant of Ukrainian (pp. 15–43). Differences between western Ukrainian and eastern Ukrainian language variants can be traced at the phonetic, orthographic, morphological, lexical-semantic, phrasemic and syntactic levels. The western variant of Ukrainian was formed on the basis of the Galician–Bukovinian koine and functioned mostly in the urban environment, as

¹ Liudmyla Pidkuimukha, "The language of L'viv, or when it was spoken by the *Batyars*" (Kyiv: Klio, 2020, pages 326).

opposed to the eastern variant, which was used in rural areas. Southwestern dialects also occupied an important place. In contrast to areas under tsarist government, in Galicia and Bukovina the Ukrainian language existed in fiction, theatre, journalism, church life, jurisprudence and science. In addition to describing the language situation, the author shows the socio-cultural features of L'viv itself in the interwar period. L'viv, like the whole of Galicia at the time, was located in one of the most interesting corners of Europe with regards to multinationalism. In L'viv at that time, Poles, Ukrainians, Jews, Armenians, and Germans got along enjoyed fairly good relations. The author aptly explains the impact of the dominant Polish onto Ukrainian, although she rightly notes that in addition to the Polish influence, other languages (e.g. German, Hungarian, Yiddish) also had an influence in the form of loanwords. It is worth noting that passive bilingualism was possessed by Poles, whereas Ukrainians displayed an active bilingualism. This completely coincides with the personal testimony and research of Zofia Kurzowa (Kurzowa, 2006, p. 73; Levchuk, 2019, pp. 1–3, 2020, pp. 126–130).

The second chapter is dedicated to the lexical content of the L'viv koine (pp. 44–109). Based on the analysis of the literary group “Twelve”, the author identifies the following elements:

1. koine as a form of oral speech of citizens;
2. the language etiquette of the city as a local form of communication;
3. components of speech, caused by the professional differentiation of the population (sports vocabulary and jargon, underground jargon);
4. a type of speech that reflects age stratification (school jargon);
5. *Batyar* jargon as the specific speech of a separate social group (p. 51).

The first element refers to the definition of the term “koine”, its origins and current significance in linguistics, and to the specifics of the L'viv koine. The analysis of literary works made it possible to distinguish the following lexical and semantic groups: names of abstract concepts; lexemes associated with administration and governance; legal vocabulary; vocabulary reflecting industrial and financial-economic relations; social and household concepts; vocabulary denoting intellectual processes; vocabulary of art, culture, and leisure; vocabulary of science, culture, and education; medical vocabulary; military vocabulary; vocabulary denoting the appearance and physical characteristics of people; people's qualitative characteristics; names of persons based on profession and type of activity; names of persons based on family, friendship, and working relations; names of signs; names of actions and states expressed by verbs; names of signs of action, process, state, and quality. Additionally, the author divides the vocabulary denoting urban life into the following lexical and semantic groups: names of spatial concepts and transport; names of residential and non-residential premises, buildings, public institutions; names of furniture and interior items; names of household items; names of clothes, shoes, and accessories; names of food and drinks. The author also traced the presence of western regionalism in the following dictionaries: *‘Malorusko-nimetskyi slovar’* Ye. Zhelekhivskyi and S. Nedilskyi (ZHelekhivs'kyi & Nedil's'kyi, 1886), *‘Russian-Ukrainian Dictionary’*, edited by A. Krymskyi and S. Yefremov (Kryms'kyi & Iefremov, 1924–1933) and *‘Dictionary of the Ukrainian Language’* in 11 volumes (Bilodid, 1970–1980). The issue of borrowings from other languages, especially from Polish and loanwords which were incorporated into Ukrainian via Polish, is also covered.

The topic of language etiquette, which in my opinion the author did not fully cover, is interesting. The most commonly used lexemes are: *pan*, *pani*, *panna*, *dobrodiika*, *dobrodiiz*, and other forms derived from them. The author does not distinguish the meanings of *pani* and *panna*, where *panna* denotes an unmarried girl/woman. This form remains in Polish (e.g. *panna*). Another important lexeme is *servus*, which has maintained its presence in modern Polish (Pidkuimukha, 2020a, p. 6).

Another important lexical and semantic field is sports vocabulary. The author singles out the following groups: lexemes denoting athletes, football players in accordance with the positions on the field; lexemes related to the match itself, game moments or events that take place on

the field; lexemes related to the stadium and football field; lexemes to denote the equipment of football players. Like the lexemes from the previous groups, their presence in the aforementioned dictionaries was checked.

The next section (p. 110–156) is dedicated to student and *Batyar* jargon. Starting from theoretical considerations on the concepts of jargon, sociolect, argot and their interpenetrations, the author proceeds to analyse student vocabulary. The following groups of words are distinguished: types of educational activities; academic subjects; school staff and teachers; assessments; school premises; names of students; school supplies; actions related to the learning process. It is interesting that even now in the vocabulary of Polish students one can find the lexemes *buda*, *kużon*, *atrament* and others (Jelonek, 2012, pp. 115–259).

After describing student vocabulary, the author turns to the little-studied *Batyar* jargon. The introduction to this part of the monograph rightly draws attention to the weak study of this topic among Ukrainian researchers compared to Polish scholars. Based on research, the following groups of vocabulary by origin are distinguished: Polonisms; Germanisms; Yiddishisms and Hebraisms; Romanianisms. The last part of the third chapter considers the potential of phraseologisms used in the publications.

The fourth chapter (p. 157–172) is dedicated to Soviet language policy. The author describes the activities of the Soviet authorities, which were aimed at maximizing the convergence of Ukrainian and Russian and building a common state. These activities included editorial policy, shown by the example of different editions of the same works. This topic has been well studied in Ukrainian linguistics. It should be noted that the author is well versed in the scientific literature which exists on this matter, and introduces new information about research into the linguistic of Ukrainian.

The fifth chapter (p. 173–194) is dedicated to updating Galician vocabulary in the works of contemporary writers based on the example of works by Yuri Vynnychuk. In this chapter I will allow myself to disagree with the claim that *pani inzhinirova* signifies the position of the addressee (p. 174). It is more the position of the addressee's husband which is signified. Similar forms, such as *pani generalowa* (general's wife) and *pani profesorowa* (professor's wife), occur in Western Galicia even in the 21st century. It is possible, in my view, to also signal the presence of a husband in women's surnames. In such cases, just as in the case of *inzhinirova*, a suffix in the nominative case, *-ova*, is used. In the second decade of the 21st century at the Jagiellonian University in Kraków, famous professors in the faculty of Polish Studies submit all their publications, signatures and seals exclusively in this form — prof. Dr hab. Jadwiga Kowalik signs as Kowalikowa (wife of Kowalik), and Dr Maria Madej signs as Madejowa. The work of Liudmyla Pidkuimukha frequently refers to Professor Zofia Kurzowa, whose husband is Andrzej Kurz rather than Kurzowy, whose surname is another example of this phenomenon. Outside Kraków, this form of surname has been used by representatives of other universities, e.g. prof. Renata Grzegorzczakowa. In general, the author successfully presents the actualization of historic vocabulary in modern Ukrainian prose. The appendices are an important part of the monograph, as the first two display the titanic work performed by the author. The first appendix provides a comparative analysis of more than 100 words and phrases, used in three editions of 'The Street' by B. Nyzhankivskyi (L'viv, 1936; Kyiv, 1941 and New York, 1995). In the second appendix the author shows the presence of more than 600 mottos that she managed to distinguish as a result of studying the Ukrainian language dictionary in 11 volumes (Bilodid, 1970–1980) and in dictionaries by L. Tkach (Tkach, 2000) and ed. N. Khobzei (Khobzei et al., 2012). The third appendix presents the concept of linguistic sustainability and describes the current state of the use of Galician vocabulary in the environment of the Ukrainian diaspora in Canada.

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This article was financed by the Polish Ministry of Education and Science.

This article was supported by the CLARIN-PL (<http://clarin-pl.eu>) research infrastructure.

Competing interests: The author is the Editorial Secretary of the journal.

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Publisher: Institute of Slavic Studies, Polish Academy of Sciences

Publishing history: Received 2020-12-23; Accepted 202102-28; Published 2021-10-11.